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her goodness of heart, she could not but write what is felt to be tender, truthful and elevating. All honor to her, and to all who endeavor to make the most of their talents for noble ends.

Yet we cannot repress the wish that the singing men and women of our day would give us something more satisfying, and, therefore, better worth remembering. There is enough of mere superficial finish, too much, perhaps, of the study of words and sounds. When poems are written so as to reveal something else besides metrical skill, and show that they are instinct with qualities that cannot be traced to egotism or to limited sensibility, the world will not willingly let them die.

THE MARBLE FAWN; or, The Romance of Monte Beni. By Nathaniel Hawthorne. 2 vols. Ticknor & Fields.

We gladly welcome Mr. Hawthorne back to the workshop of American literature. But why did he give us his impressions of Italy in so dark and terrible a tragedy as this *Marble Fawn*? The elaborate machinery which Mr. Hawthorne has called to his aid in developing this ghastly story is another proof of his superior genius. And yet, although we are willing to concede that the book has great literary merit, and is written in a graceful and vigorous style, we must confess that we regard the influence of such tragedies as are here pictured so graphically, anything but good. The whole story is rank of blood, dismal in tone, unnatural, and made more ghastly with spectral figures, whose mysterious histories are written in blood and guilty love. The ingenuity of the author has, however, invested this dark and terrible story with a fascination strangely irresistible. In power of exciting the imagination, and in the wildness and ghastliness of the mantle he has cast about some of his scenes, even Mrs. Radcliffe herself is surpassed. So rank is the smell of blood with which our feelings are excited and our senses offended, that our heart gladdens when we come upon those few rays of sunshine, here and there tenderly worked in to relieve the sombre and horrifying hues of the picture. Then it is that we find ourselves instinctively asking the question, why was not so graceful and vigorous a pen employed upon a subject more pleasing to the fancy, more instructive, and better shaped for serving the ends of humanity? The progress of civilization and morality owe nothing to such books as these. They may excite and fascinate the strong and healthy mind, but they confuse, mislead, and, in too many instances, completely wreck weaker ones. And yet, a work exhibiting so much genius cannot fail of securing a large circle of readers.

NOTES OF TRAVEL AND STUDY IN ITALY. By Charles Eliot Norton. Ticknor & Fields: Boston.

Four years ago the accomplished author of the above work favored THE CRAYON with a series of letters from Italy, under the head of Italy in 1855-1856, which letters were welcomed by our readers at that time with unusual interest. These letters form a portion of the Notes of Travel and Study in Italy, the other portion consists of letters written about the same period, but not heretofore published. We are glad to see them in their present shape, and accessible to a larger audience than they enjoyed in our columns. These letters have a peculiar character. They are genuine studies, not narratives of incident, or attempts at description of ordinary scenes and people; they furnish illustrations of serious social problems, and full and complete essays on subjects of the most refined import, such as relate to monuments of Art and religion. Mr. Norton is unusually sensitive to objects that bring the middle ages to mind—such, for instance, as the noble cathedral of Orvieto. His account of the building of this

cathedral is a prose poem. What modern phase of public energy is at all comparable to that which the people of Orvieto displayed when they built this magnificent cathedral? The chapter on Petrarch and the fortunes of the Colonnas is equally interesting. Mr. Norton handles his subjects skillfully. His work helps to bring into notice the spirit of the middle ages, which the people of our day ought to know more of. It seems to us that the middle ages present phases of life and poetry, quite as enjoyable as the cycle of antiquity. Every attempt to open this mine of intellectual wealth should be welcomed, for we need some kind of *renaissance* differing from the old one of the fifteenth century.

LA FEMME. Translated from the French of M. J. Michelet, by J. W. Palmer, M.D. Rudd & Carleton, Publishers.

The author of this book has shown clearly enough that a good intention may be easily perverted. We have, perhaps, no right to quarrel with M. Michelet for his intention in writing such books; but their influence, we think, might be wisely confined to an atmosphere and to a class very different from anything found in this country. In considering the influence of these books, the first question which naturally arises in our mind is, are they fit to be placed in the hands of young and pure-minded females? On this there can be but one opinion. No father of a respectable family would for a moment permit his daughters to read them. And yet these daughters are the very persons to whom they are addressed. M. Michelet is resolved that his readers shall be thoroughly instructed in the mysteries of woman's physical nature. But instead of confining his dissertations within the boundaries of science, he has hung them in the gayest coloring of sentiment, and made them seductive where they should have only been instructive. Our remarks upon *L'Amour*, in our review of that work, will apply to *La Femme*.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES M. LEUPP. By John H. Gourlie.

This pamphlet contains an address by John H. Gourlie, delivered before the Column, a literary association in this city, of which the late Mr. Leupp was a cherished member. Mr. Gourlie pays a graceful tribute of esteem and affection to the memory of his departed friend; he presents us with an abstract of Mr. Leupp's career and an estimate of his usefulness in society, which others besides the members of the Column will carefully preserve as the most valuable souvenir of him they could desire.

HARPER'S MAGAZINE for April presents an exceedingly interesting series of articles, cleverly illustrated. Chapin, the artist, contributes an interesting and instructive article descriptive of a journey into the "Iron Regions of New Jersey." "Gold Getting in California," is well written, and through its spirited illustrations gives the reader a clear and forcible idea of what life is in the diggings, even now. Thomas Dunn English contributes a ballad on the Battle of Lexington. "The Little Art Student," a touching story, told pleasantly, is from the pen of Mrs. Addison Richards. "Yet's Christmas Box" is one of the best written articles in the number, and from the pen of the author of Sir Rohan's Ghost. Fitz James O'Brien has a clever poem, "The Lost Steamship," founded on the loss of the Hungarian. "Lovel, the Widower," by Mr. Thackeray, is continued, but its only merit is excessive dullness. The editor flanks his army of contributors with a banquet of interesting matter, well served up.